

Edinburgh Park Arena: 24/00820/FUL

Response from Spokes Planning Group, March 2024

This response considers the proposals for Edinburgh Park Arena. We wish to **comment** on the designs put forward by the developer from the perspective of cyclists who will use the cycling routes to / from / through the site that are already present, and from the perspective of Council & Scottish Government transport and cycling policies.

We are very concerned that the designers of this massive (and very welcome) development appear to be unaware of Council policies on cycling, and what little attention has been given to cycling infrastructure is wholly inadequate as well as being very poorly designed. The whole application whilst understandably focused within the redline boundary needs thorough review by the Council's Active Travel team, and consequent revision, before it goes to Committee. There is also a need for involvement especially Network Rail Scotland (Scotland's Railway) in regards to the constrained access from the south of the site.

More generally, Spokes Lothian does support the principle of developing this site as an arena given its proximity to existing public transport at Edinburgh Park station & the growing community there. It makes sense to use this site like this to help minimise private car trips to / from the site.

The location on the edge of the city near the motorway / bypass should help to minimise through routing of HGVs in the city centre with many benefits for local cyclists.

Detailed comments:

Spokes have the following detailed comments on the proposals;

Impacts on Quiet Route 8:

The proposed site is bounded on 3 sides by the existing Quiet Route 8 which links the Roseburn (for the City Centre) to Edinburgh Park via mainly segregated cycleways / paths. This is a primary and high quality link that Spokes would like to see improved. Given the amount of housing due to be built at Edinburgh Park it is very important the capacity is adequate for this especially given the Council's own modal share targets.

The proposals appear to do nothing to improve the adjacent path under the railway apart from cutting back vegetation. Spokes is concerned that during event start and end it will be impossible for cycle users to use the underpass safely.

It is noted that access through the train station over bridge will be restricted to train ticket holders (rightly so) with crowd management likely as already seen at Haymarket during events at Murrayfield.

We appreciate the area is controlled by Network Rail Scotland, so any changes are out with this application. However this is the opportunity to flag this issue. It would be good to see the arena development be the catalyst for improving this in partnership with the Council, Edinburgh Park, Edinburgh Trams & the developer contributing and collaborating together on this.

There seems to be a reliance on core paths and a lack of knowledge on the Quiet Routes network in the Transport Assessment. The proposed realignment of the path to the north of the Arena site is shown at an unacceptable 2.5m width. This should be 4m wide at minimum per Cycling by Design 2021.



The diagrams in the Transport Statement provide no reassurance that the realigned path connects to any meaningful routes further westwards. So as such we find it difficult to support this part of the proposal.

Hostile Environment:

Spokes are concerned by the visualisation of Lochside Court southwards which appears to show an inactive building frontage with no safe cycle provision linking to / from the Quiet Route.

We cannot tell if any thought has gone into how this street will be managed for car / taxi / private hire / coach / bus pick up and drop off before and after events. We think that at peak times this could be a real issue for vulnerable road users.

Given there are no apparent restrictions proposed on access to this area it is very concerning what cycle users could face if using Quiet Route 8 after the arena has been built if no design solution is found.



Spokes believes all streets should be designed as a minimum as per Edinburgh Street Design Guidance and Cycling by Design 2021. They should be conducive to safe quiet on street cycling at 20mph. If this isn't possible at peak times then a segregated off road parallel cycle route should be provided to allow safe access to and the station and surrounding sites by cycle users at all times.

If these roads fall outwith the redline boundary then some thought must be given by the Council & Developer as to how these issues can resolved.

Cycle Parking Provision:

Spokes note that the provision of 60 'Sheffield' type cycle stands is as per the minimum requirement of the Edinburgh Street Design Guidance. We note that a 1% modal share of trips is the factor that has determined the 60 no. cycle parking space provision. We want to flag to the council this seems to be contrary to the fact that in 2021 the Council stated it had a target of ~4-5% modal share for 'other' cycling trips by 2030 (which we think applies to arena trips). However this also doesn't include for staff who would also cycle commute to the site).

Given the proximity to Quiet Route 8 and the train station we think the provision is inadequate. We also think it is likely that the spaces may be utilised by rail commuters given the proximity to the station entrance and ease of access.

Cycle Parking Security:

We know that security at large gatherings is a concern and we note there is a secure bag drop for this purpose. We would request these are suitable size for bike bags / panniers as a minimum.

We would also like to comment that guests to the Arena who arrive by cycle would likely

want to securely store their bike either in a monitored / observed area undercover sheltered from the weather. We would like to suggest that sheltered and secure cycle storage provision for personal bikes integrated into the bag drop element of the proposal be investigated. This would encourage more cycle use of the venue.

Unsecure cycle parking is best suited for cycle hire bikes which would extend to the arena & station sites if reinstated in the city council.

Staff commuting to the arena to work require secure and sheltered cycle storage given the length of shifts likely. Therefore we consider the Sheffield type stands as shown inadequate for this purpose.

We ask that the developer & designers consider these matters to find a better solution taking on

In conclusion, Spokes PG would like to reiterate support for the principle of the Arena development at this site however this is caveated by some serious comments that concern the cycle design provision at and around the Arena for which we advocate for detailed design consideration to be given prior to approving the proposal.